

ABSTRACT

THESIS: Building Social Capital in an Anti-Poverty Program

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Research on social capital has shown that persons of low socioeconomic status will have access to fewer social resources. Less attention is paid to people in poverty who are actively increasing their levels of social capital and social support. Such capital and support may be significant to such individuals in a variety of ways. Using interviews with twenty low-income participants in an anti-poverty program, all of whom are connected to middle-class “allies” in intentional friendships, this study examines how participants feel they benefit from the program as well as challenges they face. Results indicate that both social support and social capital are received. A variety of challenges are also faced by low-income participants due to varying conceptions of independence based on social class as well as the nature of accountability within the relationships.